

world. Hawaii currently has 502 species listed as endangered, more than any other state and almost half of the total endangered species nationwide. Many of these species are critically endangered and face an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. Although we will never know the true number of species that have gone extinct in Hawaii, best estimates are that in the last 200 years alone, 28 bird, 72 snail, 74 insect and 97 plant species have gone extinct.

As one particularly poignant example, two years ago the Atlantic published an article, *The Last of Its Kind*, which chronicled the death of George the snail. He was the last *achatinella apexfulva*, a species of tree snail that is endemic to the island of O'ahu. This article calls attention to the alarming fact that snails in Hawaii are disappearing at an alarming rate, perhaps faster any animal on Earth right now, victims of various factors in part linked to invasive species.

The threat to our state tree, the 'ōhi'a lehua, is also illustrative of our growing crisis. Used for poi boards and outrigger canoes, the 'ōhi'a lehua is important to Hawaiian culture and the islands' watersheds. As the first tree to grow in new Hawaii lava flows, 'ōhi'a grows throughout the watershed creating new soil, stabilizing steep mountain ridges and comprises approximately 80 percent of Hawaii's native forests. However, rapid 'ōhi'a death, or ROD, caused by an invasive fungal pathogen, kills 'ōhi'a trees quickly, and threatens the stability of Hawaii's native forests. Since its discovery on the Big Island in 2014, ROD has spread to Kaua'i, Maui and O'ahu, and has killed hundreds of thousands of trees.

Hawaii's unique circumstances also have given rise to one of our nation's most diverse and productive agricultural communities. With a year-round growing cycle, our crops have ranged throughout our history from the highest quality sugar and pineapple and cattle to tropical specialty crops like fruit and cut flowers in the highest demand worldwide.

Yet it is exactly because these crops like our natural resources have adapted to Hawaii's uniqueness that they are the most susceptible to devastation from external species against which they have no natural defenses. Invasive species have drastically impacted agriculture in Hawaii, threatening some of the island's most valuable crops in the state's third-largest industry.

Hawaii's third most valuable crop, the macadamia nut, is under threat from the macadamia felted coccid. Macadamia felted coccid has been found in all of Hawaii Island's macadamia growing regions. The felted coccid reduces macadamia tree output by draining nutrients from the tree. Invasive species coupled with increased rain led to a 22 percent decline in the macadamia nut harvest this year compared to last year.

The cattle industry, which is one of Hawaii's most important agricultural commodities, has been dramatically affected by the introduction of the invasive two-lined spittlebug. Since being detected in 2016, the pest now infects more than 125,900 acres of grassland and is clearing lands for invasives grasses that further affect Hawaii's ecosystems.

Yet despite these incontrovertible and growing impacts of external species on Hawaii's natural resources and economy, existing federal law leaves Hawaii largely defenseless against increasingly destructive invasives. Im-

ports by air and sea, the only means of inbound transportation to our island state, lack any effective regulation to screen out invasives. This is despite a fairly robust screening of exports from Hawaii to the Continental United States to screen out invasives from Hawaii viewed as harmful to mainland agriculture (invasives that, ironically, were invasives into Hawaii to start with).

I sought to crack down on this lax regime to prevent and curb invasives with my introduction in 2005 of H.R. 3468, modeled after New Zealand and other isolated jurisdictions with then like now the most stringent invasive species prevention regimes in the world. Since the introduction of that bill, the threats from invasives have only grown. Since 2005, 195 invasive species have been introduced to Hawaii. That is in addition to the roughly 5,000 invasive species that have been introduced to Hawaii throughout its history.

Our bill, the Hawaii Invasive Species Protection Act, will require the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal and Plant Inspection Service (APHIS), in cooperation with other federal departments and the State of Hawaii, to conduct visual, x-ray and canine inspections, as appropriate, on person, baggage, cargo and any other article destined for direct movement to the State of Hawaii. The inspections will search for high-risk invasive species and agricultural materials. The inspections will be conducted at airports, ports and postal sorting facilities prior to direct travel to the State of Hawaii.

Our bill further requires APHIS to work with the State of Hawaii to develop and publish a list of the high-risk invasive species and agricultural materials for the State of Hawaii. It pays for these inspections by increasing Agriculture Quarantine Inspection fees to cover the full cost of inspection.

Inaction is not an option. Since my re-introduction of this bill last Congress, the coffee berry borer, which was discovered in Kona on Hawaii Island in 2010, now infects all of the coffee growing islands in Hawaii. The coffee berry borer can cause yield losses of between 30 and 35 percent and affects the quality of the coffee beans, directly impacting the income of growers. Had this bill been implemented, it may have helped prevent coffee leaf rust from entering Hawaii late last year. The confirmed presence of this fungal disease, which can lead to yield losses of between 50 and 80 percent, on multiple Hawaiian islands could leave one of Hawaii's most iconic industries devastated.

If we truly care about the threat that continued and escalating invasive species pose to one of the most invaluable and unique ecosystems on earth, in addition to our unique economy and way of life, then the stark reality is that this bill is what it will take. Again, it is not revolutionary when compared to other countries that have not only recognized this threat but actually done something about it. And it is certainly not revolutionary when compared to longstanding domestic restrictions on exports from Hawaii, leading to the basic point that if these invasive species prevention requirements are good enough for the rest of the country and much of the world then they're good enough for Hawaii.

Madam Speaker, I am grateful to this House for your understanding and careful consideration of Hawaii's challenge and opportunity, and ask for our bill's expeditious passage. Mahalo (thank you).

APPRECIATING FIRST LADY  
MELANIA TRUMP

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, American Families have been blessed the last four years with the service of First Lady Melania Trump.

She is a native of Slovenia, a beautiful new nation liberated by the American Victory in the Cold War inspired by Ronald Reagan, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Pope John Paul II of Poland

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Farewell Message of First Lady Melania Trump of January 18, 2021, which is to be treasured.

My fellow Americans, it has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as First Lady of the United States.

I have been inspired by incredible Americans across our country who lift up our communities through their kindness and courage, goodness and grace.

The past four years have been unforgettable. As Donald and I conclude our time in the White House, I think of all the people I have taken home in my heart and their incredible stories of love, patriotism, and determination.

I see the faces of brave young soldiers who have told me with pride in their eyes how much they love serving this country. To every service member and to our incredible military families: You are heroes, and you will always be in my thoughts and prayers.

I think of all the members of law enforcement who greet us wherever we go. At every hour of every day, they stand guard to keep our communities safe, and we are forever in their debt.

I have been moved by children I have visited in hospitals and foster care centers. Even as they fight difficult illnesses or face challenges, they bring such a joy to everyone they meet.

I remember the mothers who have battled the disease of Opioid addiction, and have overcome incredible hardships for love of their children.

I have been inspired by the devoted caregivers for babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome, and communities that give these children the support and care they need to grow.

When I think about these meaningful experiences, I am humbled to have had the opportunity to represent a nation with such kind and generous people.

As the world continues to confront the COVID-19 pandemic, I thank all the nurses, doctors, healthcare professionals, manufacturing workers, truck drivers, and so many others who are working to save lives.

We grieve for the families who have lost a loved one due to the pandemic.

Every life is precious, and I ask all Americans to use caution and common sense to protect the vulnerable as millions of vaccines are now being delivered.

In the midst of this hardship, we have seen the best of America shine through. Students have made cards and delivered groceries to our Senior Citizens. Teachers have worked twice as hard to keep our children learning.

Families have come together to provide meals, supplies, comfort and friendship to those in need.

Be passionate in everything you do but always remember that violence is never the answer and will never be justified.

When I came to the White House, I reflected on the responsibility I have always felt as a mother to encourage, give strength, and teach values of kindness. It is our duty as adults and parents to ensure that children have the best opportunities to lead fulfilling and healthy lives.

The passion for helping children succeed would drive my policy initiative as First Lady.

I launched Be Best to ensure that we as Americans are doing everything we can to take care of the next generation. Be Best has concentrated on three pillars: well-being, on-line safety, and opioid abuse.

In a few short years, I have raised awareness of how to keep children safe online; we have made incredible progress on our nation's drug epidemic and how it impacts the lives of newborns and families, and we have given a voice to our most vulnerable children in the foster care system.

Internationally, Be Best has evolved into a platform that encourages world leaders to discuss issues impacting the lives of children and allows them to share solutions. It has been an honor to represent the American people abroad. I treasure each of my experiences and the inspiring people I have met along the way.

As I say farewell to my role as First Lady, it is my sincere hope that every American will do their part to teach our children what it means to Be Best. I ask parents to educate your children about the courageous and selfless heroes who worked and sacrificed to make this country the land of the free. And to lead by example and care for others in your community.

The promise of this Nation belongs to all of us. Do not lose sight of your integrity and values. Use every opportunity to show consideration for another person and build good habits into your daily lives.

In all circumstances, I ask every American to be an ambassador of Be Best. To focus on what unites us. To rise above what divides us. To always choose love over hatred, peace over violence, and others before yourself.

Together, as one national family, we can continue to be the light of hope for future generations and carry on America's legacy of raising our nation to greater heights through our spirit of courage, goodness and faith.

No words can express the depth of my gratitude for the privilege of having served as your First Lady.

To all the people of this country: You will be in my heart forever.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

#### RECOGNIZING RICK SENSE'S SERVICE TO WISCONSIN'S EIGHTH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

##### HON. MIKE GALLAGHER

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. GALLAGHER. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to recognize my District Chief of Staff, Rick Sense, for his service to Wisconsin's Eighth District. He began his career with the U.S. House of Representatives in January of 2011 in the office of my predecessor, Congressman Reid Ribble. He then continued his service as my District Chief of Staff, serving with me in the 115th and 116th Congress, until his time working with us in the House has come to an end here in 117th Congress.

Rick has dedicated his Congressional career to providing superior service to the con-

stituents of Northeast Wisconsin. He understood that his job was to make the federal government work for Wisconsinites. He dedicated his tenure to forging relationships from Appleton to Sturgeon Bay to Marinette, bringing together federal partners, the business community, and local nonprofits to share knowledge and resources.

Many who have had the pleasure of working with Rick describe him as passionate, reliable, approachable, intelligent, and extremely hardworking. He has a keen awareness of the needs of the community and provides valuable support in accomplishing the mission of my office. Despite being a Cubs fan, Rick is a valuable asset to Northeast Wisconsin whose work has touched the lives of many.

Additionally, Rick has inspired the next generation of leaders. Through patient instruction and mentorship, interns and staff who have worked with Rick have moved on to employments with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as Member offices in this Chamber, creating a ripple of change that will surely leave positive impacts in its wake.

I wish Rick the best as he begins his new role with the Greater Green Bay Chamber of Commerce. I am sure he will excel in this new position, bringing with him a deep dedication to servant leadership and desire to foster collaboration amongst Wisconsin's business community.

Politics can be a difficult world to navigate. Rick brings to it a compassion and respect that provides a constant reminder to us all of why we choose to serve this great nation. I'd like to close with the words of our former president, Abraham Lincoln. "With malice towards none, with charity for all." Rick truly embodies these words, and I am proud to have served in this fine institution with him.

#### HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF HOUSTON COUNTY BEING ESTABLISHED IN TENNESSEE

##### HON. MARK E. GREEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. GREEN of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Houston County being established and incorporated into the state of Tennessee.

Officially established on January 21st in the year 1871, Houston County takes its name from the legendary Sam Houston, who, among many things, served as the first member of Congress from the 7th district of Tennessee. Like its namesake, Houston County embodies the spirit of American grit and perseverance. From the stoked lime kilns of days past to the thriving timber industry of today, Houston County continues to foster a strong and proud community.

Over its long history, Houston County has endeavored to faithfully honor the heritage of the Irish pioneers who settled the land through the annual Irish Day Parade. One of my favorite events of the year, the Irish Day Parade, now draws over 30,000 people to Erin. The scenic countryside of Houston County is home to gently flowing creeks and streams, rolling

hills and forests, and a vibrant community with a little bit of Ireland in its soul.

Houston County is home to many of Tennessee's finest citizens, and I am honored to represent them in the United States Congress. I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Houston County on this impressive anniversary.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF MOLLY HAMMER

##### HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 21, 2021

Mr. CLEAVER. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a sadness I struggle to express on behalf of a community that has lost a voice, a city that has lost a leader, and family that has lost a friend. I rise to honor the life and memory of Molly Hammer. Molly spent years gracing Kansas City and the world with a one-of-a-kind voice and an indomitable spirit. For thirteen of those years, she did so while sharing her life with metastatic breast cancer. On Tuesday, November 24, Molly lost her fight with breast cancer. She was forty-eight years old. Her story, cut tragically short, is of a soul who sought to use her gifts to spread joy and to use her hardships to inspire hope. For fifteen years, Molly sang for us. Today, we sing of her.

Those lucky enough to have followed Molly's career since its beginning know that the talent, work ethic, and grit she displayed in the final years of her life were nothing new. Her high school choir teacher remembers her astounding professionalism while playing the narrator in her high school's production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. After graduating, she went on to become a stage actor and portrayed Patsy Cline on a stage in Iowa for five years. In 2005, Molly answered a spiritual call from a difficult industry where she could have the complete independence she craved—jazz and blues. And thank goodness she did. It was then that she dove into an intense study of vocal jazz and began an illustrious career in the Kansas City music community. Molly soon became a fixture of the 18th & Vine jazz scene, winning the 2016 Critics' Choice for Best Jazz Singer award from *The Pitch*, releasing four LPs—one just three months ago—and cementing her place as an integral stitch in the rich cultural fabric of Jazz's cradle.

In 2008, Molly was diagnosed with breast cancer, and she beat it. Eight years later, it came back, and Molly returned to her battle, this time fighting a more aggressive foe but with no less determination or spirit. And not only did Molly continue to bring joy to her community through song during that battle, she also became an outspoken advocate for cancer research and a powerful voice in bringing awareness to what it means to live life with the disease. She called for increased research funding and better methods of preventative screening, worked with organizations like *METAvivor* and the *Susan G. Komen Foundation*, and even lobbied Congress. However, though her music and her advocacy took her